

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/627,759
Amendment filed November 24, 2004
Reply to OA dated August 24, 2004

REMARKS:

Claims 1-5 are currently being considered. Claims 1-3 have not been amended. Claims 4 and 5 have been newly added. Applicant respectfully believes that no new matter has been introduced.

Before turning to the cited art, a brief review of the present invention is in order. The present invention relates to a steam-supplying apparatus for hairdressing and beauty care in which pressurized steam is sent from a steam-generating portion through an electromagnetic valve and a connecting tube, and forcibly blown out of a steam-blowing portion, comprising: a heating steam circulation passage, disposed in the electromagnetic valve, to preliminarily heat inside the electromagnetic valve with steam from the steam-generating portion also in a closed state of the electromagnetic valve; and an electric heater, disposed in the steam-blowing portion, to heat a steam passage in the steam-blowing portion.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by USP 5,076,467 (**Sugo**).

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over **Sugo** in view of USP 5,508,938 (**Yamaguchi**).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 1-3.

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Sugo does not disclose a circulation passage or return pipe which would heat the electromagnetic valve 3 when the valve 3 is closed. **Sugo** does not disclose a heater in a steam blower. **Yamaguchi** does not disclose a heating steam circulation passage and an electric heater, as set forth in claim 1.

Sugo and **Yamaguchi**, alone or in combination, fail to describe, teach, or suggest the following features of claim 1: “*a heating steam circulation passage*, disposed in the electromagnetic valve, to preliminarily heat inside the electromagnetic valve with steam from the steam-generating portion also in a closed state of the electromagnetic valve; and *an electric heater, disposed in the steam-blowing portion*, to heat a steam passage in the steam-blowing portion”, in combination with the other claimed features.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of claims 1-3 should be withdrawn.

Claims 4 and 5 have been newly added. Applicant has presented these additional claims to alternatively and more completely define Applicant’s invention and thereby assist the Examiner by facilitating the speedy and compact prosecution of the present invention.

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Although the Office Action mailed August 24, 2004 did not address these claims 4 and 5, not hitherto available to the Examiner, Applicant desires to make a record as to why **Sugo** and **Yamaguchi** do not make them obvious, and otherwise indicate why they are patentable.

Sugo and **Yamaguchi**, alone or in combination, fail to describe, teach, or suggest the following features as set forth in claim 4: "a heating steam circulation passage" and "an electric heater", in combination with the other claimed features. **Sugo** and **Yamaguchi**, alone or in combination, fail to describe, teach, or suggest the features set forth in claim 5 for the same reasons, in view of the fact that claim 5 depends from claim 4.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,
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